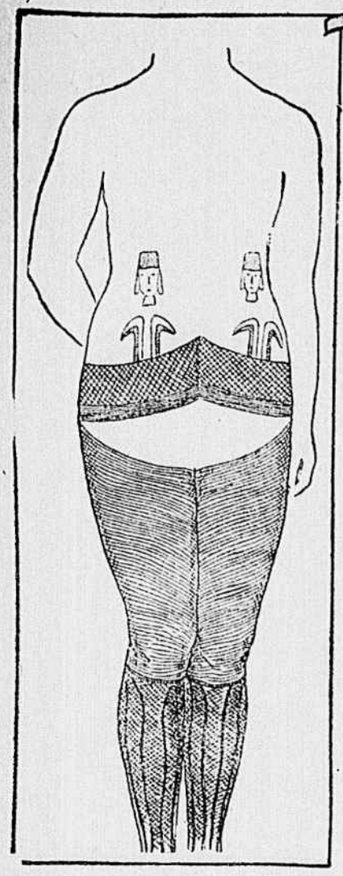
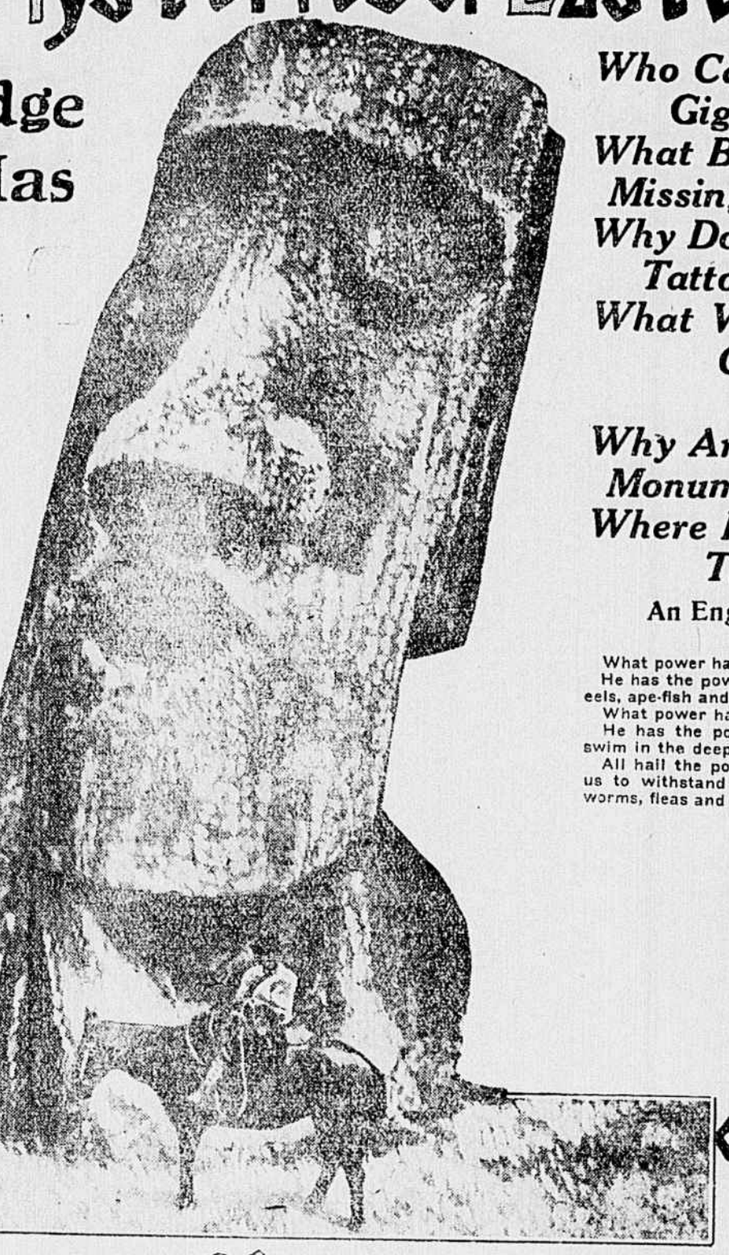


To Solve the Mysteries of Easter Island

Explorer Routledge Sends Word He Has Completed His Labors In This Solitary Home of a Forgotten Race and Their Strange Gigantic Sculptures



Who Carved the Gigantic Stone Gods?
What Became of the Missing Race of People?
Why Do the Women Tattoo Themselves So?
What Was the Sudden Catastrophe That Happened?
Why Are All the Monuments Overturned?
Where Have All Their Books Gone?

An Engraved Stone and Its Translation.

What power has the Great King on the land?
He has the power to create the lobsters, white-bait, eels, ape-fish and everything in the sea.
What power has the Great King over the sea?
He has the power to create the mighty fish that swim in the deep water.
All hail the power of the Great King who enables us to withstand the attacks of the maggots, flies, worms, fleas and all manner of insects.

Strange Tattooing on an Old Easter Island Native Showing Symbols Which Are Not Understood Now.

AN enterprising English explorer, W. Scoresby Routledge, has concluded fourteen months of hard work devoted to solving the mysteries of Easter Island.

How this lonely island, 2,100 miles west of the coast of Chili, all by itself in the midst of the vast South Pacific Ocean, should have developed thousands of years ago a peculiar civilization of its own, have produced colossal sculptures, a written literature and a complicated religion has always remained one of the most baffling mysteries of humankind.

W. Scoresby Routledge set out on his adventurous journey in his eighty-foot sailing yacht Mana, accompanied by his wife and children. He was also assisted by a geologist and archaeologist from the British Museum, who will help to determine the age of the relics, the race and history of the inhabitants and other facts.

Word has just been received from Mr. Routledge that he has completed his work on Easter Island and expects to return with the fullest history of this mysterious community yet published. This message was received through the Chilean warship General Bacquedano, which has returned from Easter Island recently, having made a stop there a few months ago. It requires ordinarily upward of three months for a message to reach the civilized world from Easter Island.

Much has been written about Easter Island, but the essential secrets have never been fathomed. There are on the island 555 colossal stone busts, the largest seventy feet high and the smallest eighteen. How they were made and what they represent are matters that have never been settled.

The age of the Easter Island civilization has hitherto been a mystery. A date varying from 2,000 to 5,000 years ago has been assigned to them. Some scientists have seen in these remains a close connection with the ancient civilizations of Mexico and South America, while Paymaster William J. Thomson, of the United States steamship Mohican, the best American authority on the subject, declares positively that the Easter Island remains represent the same stage of development as Stonehenge in England and the Cromlechs of Brittany.

It is a strange fact that among the numerous semi-civilized communities of the South Pacific Easter Island was the only one that possessed a writing and literature of its own. There are in existence about seven tablets, all that are left of a vast number, bearing the written story of the relizion and legends of the Easter Islanders.

Paymaster Thomson was able to complete a translation of these

One of the Largest of the Strange Colossal Heads on Easter Island—70 feet high and weighing 250 Tons.

when the United States steamship Mohican visited Easter Island, with the help of a very old man named Ure Vaieko, the only survivor among the islanders who remembered the written language. It was only by plying him with "the cup that cheers" and paying him liberally that the translation could be obtained.

These translations show that the Easter Islanders possessed a complicated religion of a pantheistic character and, on the whole, an elevated one. All things on earth are attributed to the marriages of various gods and goddesses. The language of one of these tablets reads like a Psalm, as shown by this extract:

"What power has the Great King on the land?

"He has the power to create the lobsters, white-bait, eels, ape-fish and everything in the sea.

"What power has the Great King over the sea?"

The existing islanders are believed to be descendants of the builders of the monuments, but they have entirely lost their civilization. When it ceased to exist is almost as much a mystery as when it came into existence. There is some evidence that the island was thickly populated in historic times, and that the population was suddenly wiped out by some catastrophe.

The monuments prove that the island possessed at one time a very large population. There are now only a few score people on it, and these seem doomed to early extinction.

The chief works of the ancient islanders left are their stone houses, sculptured rocks, platforms and images. At the southwest end of the island there are from eighty to one hundred stone houses, built in a regular line against a terrace of earth or rock, which in some cases formed the back walls of the dwelling. The walls of these peculiar houses average 5 feet in thickness and 4½ feet in height. They are about 12 feet long by 4½ feet broad. The doorways are tiny affairs, not more than 20 inches high and 19 inches wide.

The walls are formed by layers of irregular flat stones, lined inside with upright flat slabs. These latter are often painted red, white and black, showing birds, animals, faces and geometric figures. Probably the thatched hut, common on the plains, could not be well used on the exposed bluff. The low entrances were used for defense, and then, too, in the absence of doors, it was desirable to have the openings as small as possible in case of storm.

These houses were probably occupied only a short time of each year, while awaiting the coming of the sea birds, whose eggs were greatly desired.

Near these houses the rocks on the bank of the sea-cliff are carved into strange shapes, resembling human faces, tortoises, birds, fishes and mythical animals. The most common figure is a strange creature, half human in form, with bowed back and long, clawlike legs and arms. It is supposed to represent "Meke-Meke," the great spirit of the sea.

Enormous platforms of stone are on nearly every headland of the island. There is one wall 20 or 30 feet high, looking toward the sea, which is 200 to 300 feet long, and is built of stones, some of them six feet long, carefully fitted together without cement. Landward is a terrace 100 feet broad. On these platforms are slabs which were to serve as pedestals for the images, most of which have been thrown down. On one platform there are fifteen images.

The whole number of stone images is 555. Of these, not one stands in its original place. Some are inside, some just outside of the crater of Rana Roraka, at the foot of the slope, where they were finished and ready for removal to their different platforms. The large majority lie near their platforms in a more or less mutilated condition.

The largest image is in one of the quarries in an unfinished state, and measures seventy feet in length; the smallest was found in a cave, and was about three feet long. The majority of them are from fifteen to eighteen feet high. They are all made of gray, compact, trachotic lava, which, because of its conglomerate character, was easily worked by the rude implements of the people. The head was, in all cases, cut flat on top to accommodate crowns made of red vesicular tufa found in one of the craters. It is supposed that the images represent distinguished personages and are intended as monuments to their memory. They show the same type of face in all cases. The head is long, the eyes far apart, the nose low-bridged and broad at the nostrils, the lips thin and somewhat pouting. The expression is stern and resolute. The images represent the human body only to the hips. There it was cut off squarely to afford a good support when standing.

The marvel is how, without mechanical contrivances, these images were set up in places distant from the quarries where they were lowered by a system of chocks and hempen ropes to their proper places. The platforms were all built with sloping terraces in the rear, so that the images could be more easily dragged into place.

The name Easter Island was given to the place by the Dutch Admiral Roggeveen, who discovered the island on Easter Sunday, 1721. To the natives the island is known as Te Pito te Henua, a name signifying "the centre and interior of the body." To the simple-minded Polynesian it is a suggestive and beautiful name. The island is distinctly of volcanic origin, and craters are clearly traceable on nearly all the hills and mountains. Raha Kao and Rana Roraka are the two chief volcanoes, and their craters are of great depth, with lakes of water at their bottoms.

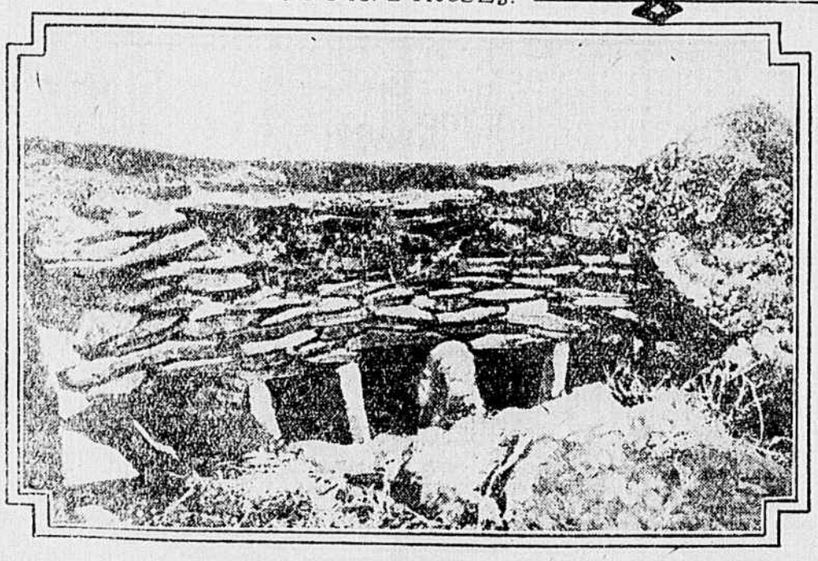
The native thinks he can see in the shape of the crater and in the gently sloping sides of Rana Kao some resemblance to the human stomach. He imagines, too, that these images were created which now, lying prostrate and mutilated in the dust, are still objects of awe and wonder to the traveler. Hence the name of Te Pito te Henua. A more modern name sometimes applied to Eastern Island is that of Rapa Nui, which was bestowed upon it some twenty years ago by the people of Tahiti.

Irregularly triangular in shape, Easter Island has an area of only thirty-four square miles. Its greatest length is thirteen miles, its greatest width seven miles. The colossal figures which puzzle the world must have been hewn out of the rock with vast labor, and those enormous platforms, found on nearly every headland around the coast, must have been erected with the help of many hands. Only with infinite pains, too, could those images have been moved to their places upon the platforms by a people whose only implements of engineering were the lever and the roller.

Since its discovery the island has been visited at successive times by Cook and La Perouse, by the H. M. S. Blossom in 1825 and Topaz in 1868, by the Chilean gunboat O'Higgins in 1870 and 1875, by the H. M. S. Sappho in 1882, and by the German gunboat Hyoene in 1882.

The natives proudly claim descent from the ancient image-makers, but they are clearly inferior to their great progenitors. They are rather a small-boned, medium-sized people, with a pleasing, intelligent cast of countenance. There is nothing repulsive or savage in their appearance, and some of the women are quite comely.

PICTURED SLABS FROM THE ANCIENT STONE HOUSES.



Group of Stone Houses Belonging to the Mysterious Ancient Inhabitants of Easter Island at Orongo.

One of the "Small" Heads from Easter Island, Now in the National Museum at Washington.

"Insaroff" A Story by Mrs. Leonard M. Thomas,

(Continued from preceding page)

illness before her words could make sense. How I feared to hear any clearness through those disconnected ramblings. Once I thought I heard her call my name. It was weeks before she recovered. The trees were all out and the whole of Paris smelt like a great bouquet. Sometimes the Summer made me forget, and I thought only of her youth, of her beauty, and the promise that everything seemed to hold out to her, and then after dinner my feet would halt upon that carpet which seemed turned into a red marsh of blood, and she a mummy burnt out by its own hand which could never live again. Ah! what moments of despair those were! That house, seemed lined with coffins and in my best moments I stumbled across them.

"Then one day what I had vaguely expected came to pass. She told me I must help her to leave—that she could not bear it any longer. I questioned her no more than I had before. We cannot question those we love in the really vital times. I gave her all that I had, myself she rejected, and I let her out one soft night into Paris alone with the smell of green gardens and acacia blooms. We said good night at the Pont Neuf. I watched her hurry away from me; once she turned and waved. I thought she would come back and stretched out my arms to her, but the tap of her little feet on the pavement sounded in my ears and in my soul long after she had passed out of my sight. How I loved her; it will always be a pain, yet I have lived." (Miss Rice's head was upon her arms, she was sobbing with the shabby arm of Miss Ingles around her for comfort. My sister's eyes were lowered to hide her tears, and the Italian was looking past us at something he had long ago forgotten.)

Suddenly our friend broke out. "Can't you see how it was done? No wonder it happened. Why did they take so much care to make her believe so strongly in everything that he would knock down. If one is to live in a mud patch, one's education should be in the gutter, not in the clouds. But I know I have thought since. * * * I feel sure that she never loved him. If she loved him she could not have done what she did. After all, it is our senses not our hearts that make criminals of us." (He paused.) "I have told you this—it is my song. I wanted to give it to the air, to no purpose you will say, but after all what is to any purpose?" (He coughed violently and rose slowly to his feet.) "I cannot tell the end, I do not know it," he muttered. "I only wanted to say to you how beautiful she was, and how I loved her." (He finished. There was an instant clatter of noise, a breath of cold street air, the banging of an iron door, and he had gone!)

* * * * * * * *

And when they had all gone, even my sister leaving me in the midst of a reverie which I could not seem to shake off, suddenly, like a breath of hot air from a disturbed room, came a stifling wish in me to connect two things, two impressions of mine: a woman I had actually seen and the woman of Andrie's story. His words came back to me; a pair of eyes that drew one after them. * * * mad and blind with * * * mad with * * * how well I seemed to imagine the rest. I lived over the little scene in my studio—her reticence over nothing—the sense of apology—with which she had saturated my room. What were her fears, her regrets and her concealments? I was to paint her, yet after all what could that tell me? For my curiosity was a peculiar one; too important to meddle with—too delicate to touch.

And then, while my mind was still groping with the vision of this wistful enigma, suddenly my eye caught the greenish worn brim of a bit of cardboard beneath my chair. I picked it up in a very wave of preoccupation, turned it carelessly over and saw the photograph of an exquisite girl, one whom life had only enchanted, and it was she—that same woman whose face, pale with the dismay of haunting dreams, had entered my studio only that morning, leaning timidly upon my sister's arm, apologetically avoiding the bits of cumbersome furniture and also my look of pleasure and surprise. And as I stood and stared at the extraordinary tarnished bit of discovery, suddenly pity, pity that such proud beauty should have grown into such weak despair swept over me with gray obtrusiveness, drowning all of my curiosity with the deepest sympathy. I had chanced upon a secret—well, my hands would lay it back again, undisturbed amid its chaos of regrets.

So I put the photograph in a small envelope and left it for Insaroff without my name.

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